

malevolent, contemporary doppelganger . . . it exploits the very features that make us successful as a species.”

Much of the book focuses on valiant efforts from all quadrants of society to “defeat” cancer. Fittingly, though, the tale concludes in the present day, with a dying patient named Germaine. Mukherjee echoes lessons learned from Vivian Bearing, Ph.D., when he notes that the “War on Cancer may best be ‘won’ by redefining victory.” As the study of oncology matures and departs its “fiery adolescence, entrance[d] with universal solutions and radical cures,” *The Emperor of All Maladies* will serve as a guidepost to physicians, researchers, patients, and anyone else with an interest in cancer. In leaving us seated there, at Germaine’s bedside, *Emperor* reveals its greatest treasure: a sense that death is not a loss or a failure, but rather the only unequivocal fact of human existence, and that strength and dignity is found there. On this no additional research need be conducted.

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Historical Notes on Anaesthesia and Intensive Care. Edited by Christine M. Ball, M.B., B.S. (Hons), F.A.N.Z.C.A., and Rodney N. Westhorpe, M.B., B.S., F.R.C.A., F.A.N.Z.C.A. Australian Society of Anaesthetists, 2011. Pages: 287. \$55.00 (Australian).

In their authors’ note, “Chris” Ball and “Rod” Westhorpe introduce this hardcover book as representing “an evolution – of the Geoffrey Kaye Museum of Anaesthetic History, the *Anaesthesia and Intensive Care* journal and of anesthesia as a specialty.” In this long-awaited book, these honorary curators of the Geoffrey Kaye Museum have collated and expanded the cover notes that they penned from 1989 to 2011 for volumes 17–39 of the Australian journal *Anaesthesia and Intensive Care*. Revised but sequenced chronologically in their order of publication as cover notes, these “historical notes” fall naturally into the following unofficial groupings: clearing the airway, inhalers and vaporizers, flowmeters, intravenous and induction agents and equipment, local anesthesia, muscle relaxants, inhalation agents, patient monitoring, and analgesics and premedication.

Strengths of *Historical Notes* include its scholarly content, pleasing readability, and splendid photography. The book’s weaknesses are those reflected by all such books. It represents a sampler of apparatus and pharmaceuticals and is consequently discontinuous in its timeline. Any such gallery-based book also manifests a geographic bias favoring the museum’s location (Melbourne, Australia) and the collecting bias of its founder (Geoffrey Kaye). Fortunately for the authors, Kaye traveled and collected widely. As illustrated throughout *Historical Notes*, anaesthetist Kaye was also a gifted machinist

who enjoyed “sectioning” through apparatus for educational exhibits. *Historical Notes* guides both professional and lay readers through an exhilarating review of anesthesia and analgesia through the ages, but particularly through the past 170 yr. The book’s end notes provide a bonanza of information for scholars. The 11-page index is similarly useful to both researchers and readers at large.

Because my own children have never grasped the historical tradition behind what anesthesiologists actually do for a living, I purchased a copy of *Historical Notes* as a holiday gift for each of them. Whether buying for a library or a loved one, anesthesiologists will be hard pressed to find a better researched or better illustrated “coffee table book” in our specialty. Finally, an anesthesia book that does not induce general anesthesia!

A limited private printing by the Australian Society of Anaesthetists, this book can only be ordered from the merchandise section of the Society website.*

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Things I Didn’t Learn in Medical School: Tough Lessons from a Lifetime of Practice.

Gary L. Fanning, M.D. Bloomington, Indiana, Xlibris Corporation, 2012. Pages: 176. Price: Hardcover—\$29.99, Softcover—\$19.99, Ebook—\$3.99.

In *Things I Didn’t Learn in Medical School: Tough Lessons from a Lifetime of Practice*, Dr Gary Fanning speaks directly to readers about the behavior he recommends for physicians to maintain the respect of the public. Although we should have learned some of his moral principles in grade school, high school, or certainly by college, his many illustrative stories depict physicians, other healthcare workers, and/or patients who either did not learn them or chose to ignore them. He says the book pertains mainly to those entering the medical profession or other healthcare professions, but others can learn from his experiences as well. Each of the 14 chapters in the book begins with excellent and relevant quotes from famous people.

The “Introduction” and “Who Am I” chapters offer a description of Gary Fanning’s background, providing insights into where he is coming from when he stresses his philosophies concerning hand washing, alcoholism, drug use, and infidelity, the latter in a chapter entitled “Ignore Your Gonads.” His family, his mentors in school, and especially his Episcopalian minister influenced his ideas. Many readers will recall experiences similar to his and accounts of similar untoward incidents. For example, training hospitals in which operating room pharmacies have not implemented programs to confirm that returned drugs and controlled

* <http://www.asa.org.au>. Accessed July 20, 2012.

substances are what they are supposed to be may lose a resident a year to a drug problem.

I am especially glad he wrote a chapter about respect for fellow human beings. He includes respect for patients' rights to accept or refuse a prescribed treatment. He reminds us that we are not gods and should treat those nonphysicians with whom we work with respect as well as our fellow physicians even when we disagree with them. As an anesthesiologist for more than 50 yr, I too have observed too many incidences of disrespect.

He strongly opposes government telling physicians how to practice medicine or interfering with the doctor–patient relationship, nor does he have any love for insurance companies. Dr Fanning says the practice of medicine is a business, and physicians should be fairly compensated for their work. Therefore, physicians in training should have some courses in economics. In the chapter on “Medical Economics,” he includes valuable stories to illustrate his points.

In the chapter entitled “Medical–Legal Issues,” he tells of his own experiences with lawsuits, offers ideas about how the system can be improved, and concludes with some worthwhile advice. When I was an intern, a philosophical internist told me the way to avoid lawsuits was first to know what you are doing and second to be kind to people. Dr Fanning lists five recommendations, the first two of which are what I was told more than 50 yr ago. The next three are to document, to trust your lawyer, and to remember it is all about money.

Finally, Dr Fanning suggests that there is more to life than medicine and suggests ways to expand one's horizons and enjoy life. Taking care of oneself is the first step toward having a full and meaningful career and life. Much of the advice is pretty basic in the chapters “There's More to Life than Medicine” and “Take Care of Yourself,” but repetition never hurts. Dr Fanning's stories are interesting but often tragic, sad, and/or humorous. As an anesthesiologist in the practice longer than Dr Fanning, I can especially relate to and enjoy his anecdotes, but I am sure any reader can gain insights and pleasure from this book.

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The Road Back: A Journey of Grace and Grit. By Michael Vitez. Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2012. Pages: 212. Price: \$ 18.00.

The Road Back: A Journey of Grace and Grit, by Pulitzer Prize-winner Michael Vitez, is an inspiring and gut-wrenching story of Matt Miller, a young triathlete and student at the

University of Virginia, who suddenly and without warning was inexplicably struck by tragedy, suffering life-threatening injuries in a cycling accident on a remote mountain pass. Miraculously, his accident was witnessed by Mark Harris, an anesthesiologist, and his wife, who happened to be out for a morning drive with their car club. Dr. Harris told his wife he thought the boy was dead. Nonetheless, like the Good Samaritan depicted at the top of the Ether Monument in Boston's Public Garden, Dr. Harris went to Matt's aid and found he had a crushed face and skull, was not breathing, and exhibited signs of brain damage. Dr. Harris instinctively performed a risky maneuver, knowing it might do more harm than good but also knowing it was his best shot at getting Matt to breathe, which would buy them enough time to get him to a trauma center. As fate would have it, good fortune continued to be on Matt's side. All the right people were in exactly the right places at the right times, including, in addition to Mark Harris, the dedicated airlift flight nurse who set his transportation in motion, the nursing student friend studying at home who contacted his girlfriend, and a trauma team awaiting his arrival at one of the leading American trauma centers. The phone call every parent hopes they will never receive was made. How his parents, brother, and girlfriend responded is remarkable.

At the time of his accident, Matt was an amazingly fit 20-yr-old who was on top of the world. He was highly committed to pursuing a career in medicine and had a loving girlfriend and an incredibly close family. His future prospects seemed extraordinary, but in an instant his life changed forever.

The tale of Matt's survival and recovery is moving. In the race against time to save his life and preserve his brain and facial functions, the medical teams worked together with amazing diligence. But would that be enough? His constrained but emotional father, his pragmatic and level-headed mother, and his faithful girlfriend would watch in wonder as this brilliant young man struggled to regain his ability to pursue his academic and other personal goals. Always one to test himself and push his limits, Matt Miller would prove his mettle and amaze and inspire everyone who knew him. What he accomplished in such a short time after his accident was nothing short of miraculous.

The Road Back is a must read for parents. We often wonder what our children are capable of and how our guidance and nurturing have helped shape who they are. Matt's story will reassure the reader that their children will have what it takes when they need it most, though you will pray that they will never need it to the extent Matt Miller did.

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